MODERN SOCIALISM

A Journal of Revolutionary Re-Education

★ WINTER 1941-42 ★

THE ROLE OF THE PARTY

A Discussion by ANTON PANNEKOEK ★ FRANK MAITLAND ★ PAUL MATTICK

A Personal Re-Interpretation of Socialist Aims and Methods by PROF. GEORGE HARTMANN

Crisis of Capitalism and Revolutionary Marxism by HUGO OEHLER

THE WAR
A SOCIALIST POSITION

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MODERN SOCIALISM

A CRITICAL MARXIST QUARTERLY

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Editorial

The War—The Socialist Position

The United States is now formally at war with the Axis powers. It becomes necessary to take a stand on this "shooting" war in which the country is now engaged.

As a lifelong revolutionary Socialist and opponent of the First World War, the Editor has no special partiality for British-American Imperialism, nor yet for its nondescript ally, Stalinist Totalitarianism. He has at all times opposed the one and loathingly rejected the other. Neither is the Editor unmindful of the fact that the present war has its roots deep in historic inter-imperialist rivalries. Nor is he prepared to embrace the jingo's narrow creed, "my country, right or wrong."

Yet, notwithstanding the foregoing considerations, the conclusion cannot be escaped that *this war is different.* This is one capitalist war in which the working class has a far-reaching stake. For despite its imperialist background and character, the present conflict is predominantly a *social* war in contrast to the First World War. For the workers of the world an Axis victory will be a change for the worse. Nazi imperialism is based upon a master-race enslavement of the workers of the world. A victorious Nazi imperialism will destroy the independent industry of conquered territories and reduce such countries to the status of a permanent colonial "hinterland of exploitable material and human resources." A Nazi victory will seal the doom of the proletariat and with it the cause of Socialism for our time.

In the struggle against the Axis powers in which this country is now engaged, a class conscious Socialist may not supinely stand aside, contributing only revolutionary phrases. To refuse to participate in this struggle is to desert the proletariat in the hour of its gravest peril, substituting social theology and blind sectarianism for revolutionary realism. MODERN SOCIALISM, for its part, is not content to confine itself to verbal denunciation of Fascism. MODERN SOCIALISM implements its opposition to Fascism with wholehearted, unequivocal support of the military struggle against Nazism and its Axis allies. It subscribes to the concept that when a plague is devastating the world, police measures are the first necessity. But something more than police measures, notwithstanding Mr. Churchill, is necessary in coping with a plague. It is essential to strike at the roots and clean out the source of infection. The plague of Nazism has its roots in Capitalism.

In taking our stand foursquare for full co-operation in the military struggle against Nazism we by no means make our peace with Capitalism as a social order. The necessity for supporting the military war against the Axis powers does not invalidate the indictment against Capitalism as the infection source of Fascism, nor does it call for the suspension of the political class struggle. Quite the contrary. The continuation of the political class struggle is an integral part of the war against Fascism and Nazism.*

The fact that Anglo-American imperialism is now engaged in an all-out military struggle against the Hitler-Nazi regime does not wipe out past history nor change the social content of Anglo-American imperialism, transforming it over night into a principled defender of democracy per se. In the present conflict Anglo-American imperialism is primarily concerned with preserving its imperialist hegemony (at this point to prevent distortion of our position we repeat once more: notwithstanding the imperialist motivation of Roosevelt-Churchill the class conscious Socialist has no alternative but to fully co-operate in the military war against Nazism and its Axis allies). Liberals and others who would "forget" these basic facts and who falsely propagate the concept that Anglo-American Imperialism is primarily concerned with defending "The Democratic Way of Life" do violence to truth and decency. In carrying on the battle against Fascism we must tell the WHOLE truth not only about the barbarous Hitler-Nazi regime and its Japanese cat's paw, but also about British-United States Imperialism and the role that it has played and continues to play. Part of this truth is the growing Fascist peril right here at home.

In electing to support the military war against Nazism we categorically reject the capitalist concept of "National Unity," which in practice means that the sacrifices of war are to be confined to the workers who are expected to surrdender basic rights while the capitalist class, harvesting stupendous war profits, takes every safeguard to protect its special class priviliges. The experience of Great Britain at war has driven home the point that, so far as the capitalist ruling class is concerned, "National Unity" is merely a smoke screen behind which it continues to carry on ITS OWN class struggle with renewed intensification against the working class.

Finally, in supporting the military war against Nazism, we categorically reject the Churchill-Roosevelt bourgeois war aims as embodied in the Eight Point Atlantic Charter. We are not interested in making the world safe for Capitalism nor in perpetuating its class regime of exploitation. We are not interested in preserving the world hegemony of Anglo-American Imperialism, in holding India for British Imperialism and keeping the 40,000,000 Javanese of the Dutch East Indies under the iron heel of the Dutch bankers and imperialist exploiters. In joining the war against Nazism we fight to destroy the Hitler-Nazi regime, the deadliest enemy of humanity; the main and immediate enemy of the workers. Only Socialism

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* The seeming contradiction of rendering military support to Churchill-Roosevelt accompanied by political opposition, is dealt with in the Editorial "The Logic of Our War Position" which follows.

can win the war for humanity. Only Socialism can save the "Democratic Way of Life" by destroying Capitalism at its roots. And when we speak of Socialism we mean class struggle Socialism, not the namby-pamby Socialism of the muddle-headed utopian appeasers who call for a "revolution by consent": naively appealing to the ruling class to voluntarily surrender their special class privileges so that society may be reconstructed along rational, social lines. As if a single ruling class in the entire gamut of history ever saw fit to commit political suicide by voluntarily abdicating! Now as ever, the emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself.

This is our Socialist position on war. Not mere verbal denunciation of Fascism but full co-operation in the military struggle against Nazism, plus the simultaneous waging of the political class struggle. No political support to Capitalism and its class regime of imperialist exploitation.

The "Logic" of Our War Position

Elswhere in this issue will be found a letter from Dwight Macdonald, who, among other things, takes exception to our war attitude as "illogical." To Macdonald, our distinction between the "nation as a whole" and as something worth fighting for, and the state as a political organ of class oppression, is a labored one and lacks reality. For him, the "nation" in bourgeois society can only be an instrument of the ruling class. Implicit in Macdonald's criticism is the contention that our double-barreled position of supporting the Roosevelt-Churchill military struggle against the Axis powers and simultaneously waging a political class struggle against Capitalism is incompatible and at fisticuffs with itself. The questions here raised are of fundamental importance, going to the very heart of a Socialist war position, and call for more than a cursory treatment. — Editor.

Macdonald taxes our war position with being illogical. But we are not dealing with an abstract-logical proposition, our subject matter is concrete historical phenomena. Macdonald readily sees the limitations of the abstract-logical approach in the case of Burnham, Eastman and others when they apply it in their criticism of Marxism, but strangely enough in dealing with the war problem he adopts the same abstract-logical approach. This is all the more paradoxical since Macdonald was the first among Marxists to point out the *social* character of the present war in contrast with the 1914-1918

war. He freely concedes that this war is not a "repetition" of World War I. He writes:

> "This war is 'different' from the last one. . . . The Kaiser's victory would not have meant a break in our civilization. Hitler's would."*

Notwithstanding, Macdonald proceeds to resurrect the Luxembergian tactics of revolutionary defensism formulated in opposition to an outright imperialist war, and applys them to the present situation. In other words, he rejects the premises of traditional Marxism in opposing the present war, yet at the same time accepts the conclusion and tactics that flow from those premises. What is this but a negation and denial of the scientific-historical method?

THE BASIC PREMISE

Before answering Macdonald's criticism in detail let us first outline our premises and the conclusions we draw from them. Today, the immediate and deadliest enemy of the working class is the Hitler-Nazi regime. Hitler's offensive is directed not only against the hegemony of British-American Imperialism, but equally against the world proletariat. The price of a Nazi victory will be master-race totalitarian enslavement and the extinction of the proletariat as a social force for generations to come. *A Hitler victory must be opposed and avoided at all costs.* However, the proletariat is in no position either ideologically or organizationally to carry on an independent, class offensive against Nazism. Under these circumstances the Marxist has no choice but to utilize every weapon and means available, including the negative, uncertain and dubious forces of Roosevelt-Churchill in the war against the Hitler-Nazi regime. This calls for full support of the *military* campaign against Hitler. Military support, however, does not necessarily involve or imply political and ideological support of Capitalism. By way of illustration: Marx and Engels in supporting the Prussian regime at the outset of the Franco-Prussian war, did not endorse the Prussian political regime nor abate their opposition to its political philosophy and ideology. If we are reminded that this was not an imperialist war at the outset, our answer is that the present war too, is not predominantly imperialist, and the principle involved remains the same.

ON SUPPORTING ROOSEVELT-CHURCHILL

We are now in a position to take up Macdonald's specific criticisms. His formulation to the effect that we oppose the Roosevelt-Churchill regimes before invasion but support them after invasion is incorrect. Insofar as the Roosevelt-Churchill regimes carry on a military campaign against Hitler, we support these efforts at *all* times, since Hitler is the immediate and main enemy. We do not support Roosevelt-Churchill politically, inasmuch as their opposition to the Nazi Regime is an unprincipled one and represents an attempt to perpetuate their world-wide imperialist hegemony, viz., the Eight Point Atlantic Charter.

Now for the implied objection contained in Macdonald's criticism of our

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*Ten Propositions On The War. *Partisan Review*, July-August, 1941.

position, viz., the "inconsistency" in withholding political support while supporting the military efforts of Roosevelt-Churchill. In this connection, the cry is raised in other quarters that to policically criticize the existing Allied regimes, to continue to carry on the class struggle, to tell the truth about the growing Fascist menace at home and, finally, to challenge the Capitalist-Imperialist peace plans of Roosevelt-Churchill—that all this serves to weaken the struggle against Hitler. Those who raise these objections base themselves necessarily on the proposition that the only threat of Fascism comes from the direction of Hitler Germany. They ignore the fact that the strongest allies of Hitlerism are to be found in the ranks of our own capitalist class, who today, under pressure of the war, are seeking to nullify the civil liberties inherent in political democracy and are resorting more and more to Fascist methods in their efforts to preserve their ruling class position. Actually, were the working class to accept the Socialist position of destroying the roots of Fascism, not only in Nazi Germany but here at home as well, the defeat of Hitlerism would be made certain, since it would give the workers an even greater stake in the defeat of the Nazi barbarians and at the same time permit them to concentrate all available forces on the external front. Decidedly, withholding political support from Roosevelt-Churchill and carrying on the class struggle for Socialism is in no way incompatible with the struggle against Hitlerism.

Macdonald challenges the validity of our use of the term, "the nation as a whole." He is, actually, confusing the "nation" with the state apparatus. The "nation" is *not* the instrument of the ruling class. That the capitalists misuse the concept of the "nation" for their own class purposes does not change the fact that the proletariat has a stake in the "nation;" no more so than the bourgeois manipulation of political democracy to entrench its own minority rule, militates against the value that political democracy has for the working class. Lenin long ago answered Macdonald:

"The position that 'the proletarians have no fatherland' is actually stated in the *Communist Manifesto*. . . . But it does not follow from this that Herve and Herveists are right when they assert that it is immaterial to the proletariat in which fatherland it lives: whether it lives in Monarchist Germany, republican France or despotic Turkey. The fatherland, i. e., the given political, cultural and social environment, is the most powerful factor in the class struggle of the proletariat. The proletariat can not treat the political, social, and cultural conditions of its struggle with indifference or equanimity, consequently, it can not remain indifferent to the destiny of its country. But it is interested in the destiny of its country only *insofar as* it affects its class struggle, and not by virtue of some bourgeois 'patriotism' which sounds altogether indecent on the lips of a Social-Democrat."

Bringing Lenin up to date, we add: It does make a difference to the British and American working classes whether or not they are to become the helots of a German master race. Answering Macdonald further on this score: Where we differ from the traditional social-patriotic use of the term "nation" is in that the Social-Patriots blend the imperialist interests of the

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**Selected Works; Vol. IV, pp.* 327, 328.

ruling class with the concept of the "nation," thus making this term synonymous with the ruling class state.

Macdonald inquires, "How does the act of invasion change the nature of the "nation"? The act of invasion does *not* change the nature of the "nation." But it does change the objective conditions, the premises from which we determine our tactics. Once the spearhead of Fascism is at our gates, with the working class continuing in its present state of ideological and organizational unpreparedness, the political struggle against Capitalism will have become untenable. The alternative of Socialism will then be ruled out. All efforts will have to be concentrated on repulsing the invaders, whose victory will hold for the working class a compound master-race slavery.

Macdonald has only to answer a few simple questions to demonstrate how utterly impractical any other program would be. What would be his attitude in the event of a Nazi invasion of Great Britain? Would he continue to remain on the sidelines repeating his formula that a Churchill defense means nothing to the working class, or will he join the English workers in making common cause with Churchill agains the invaders? What specific course would he have counseled during the siege of Warsaw? Finally, what is Macdonald's position on the imposition of working class economic sanctions in this war, since he adopts the program of revolutionary defensism which employes such sanctions? Unless Macdonald is prepared to accept the philosophy of revolutionary defeatism (which he specifically repudiates) how can he reject the program outlined?

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The Role of the Party

A Discussion

I

The Party and Class

THE OLD labor movement is organized in parties. The belief in parties is the main reason for the impotence of the working class; therefore, we avoid forming a new party—not because we are too few, but because a party is an organization that aims to lead and control the working class. In opposition to this, we maintain that the working class can rise to victory only when it independently attacks its problems and decides its own fate. The workers should not blindly accept the slogans of others, nor of our own groups, but must think, act and decide for themselves. This conception is in sharp contradiction to the tradition of the party as the most important means of educating the proletariat. Therefore many, though repudiating the Socialist and Communist parties, resist and oppose us. This is partly due to their traditional concepts; after viewing the class struggle as a struggle of parties, it becomes difficult to consider it as purely the struggle of the working class, as a class struggle. But partly this concept is based on the idea that the party nevertheless plays an essential and important part in the struggle of the proletariat. Let us investigate this latter idea more closely.

Essentially, the party is a grouping according to views, conceptions; the classes are groupings according to economic interests. Class membership is determined by one's part in the process of production; party membership is the joining of persons who agree in their conceptions of the social problems. Formerly it was thought that this contradiction would disappear in the class party, the "workers' party." During the rise of Social-Democracy it seemed that it would gradually embrace the whole working class, partly as members, partly as supporters. Because Marxian theory declared that similar interests beget similar viewpoints and aims, the contradiction between party and class was expected gradually to disappear. History proved otherwise. Social-Democracy remained a minority, other working class groups organized against it, sections split away from it, and its own character changed. Its own program was revised or reinterpreted. The evolution of society does not proceed along a smooth, even line, but in conflicts and contradictions.

With the intensification of the workers' struggle, the might of the enemy also increases and besets the workers with renewed doubts and fears as to which road is best. And every doubt brings on splits, contradictions, and fractional battles within the labor movement. It is futile to bewail these conflicts and splits as harmful in dividing and weakening the working class. The working class is not weak because it is split up—its is split up because

it is weak. Because the enemy is powerful and the old methods of warfare prove unavailing, the working class must seek new methods. Its task will not become clear as the result of enlightenment from above; it must discover its task through hard work, through thought and conflict of opinions. It must find its own way; therefore, the internal struggle. It must relinquish old ideas and illusions and adopt new ones, and because this is difficult, therefore the magnitude and severity of the splits.

Nor can we delude ourselves into believing that this period of party and ideological strife is only temporary and will make way to renewed harmony. True, in the course of the class struggle there are occasions when all forces unite on a great achievable objective and the revolution is carried on with the might of a united working class. But after that, as after every victory, come differences on the question: what next? And even if the working class is victorious, it is always confronted by the most difficult task of subduing the enemy further, of reorganizing production, creating new order. It is impossible that all workers, all strata and groups, with their often still-diverse interests should, at this stage, agree on all matters and be ready for united and decisive further action. They will find the true course only after the sharpest controversies and conflicts and only thus achieve clarity.

If, in this situation, persons with the same fundamental conceptions unite for the discussion of practical steps and seek clarification through discussions and propagandize their conclusions, such groups might be called parties, but they would be parties in an entirely different sense from those of today. Action, the actual class struggle, is the task of the working masses themselves, in their entirety, in their real groupings as factory- and mill-hands, or other productive groups, because history and economy have placed them in the position where they must and can fight the working class struggle. It would be insane if the supporters of one party were to go on strike while those of another continue to work. But both tendencies will defend their positions on strike or no strike in the factory meetings, thus affording an opportunity to arrive at a well-founded decision. The struggle is so great, the enemy so powerful that only the masses as a whole can achieve a victory —the result of the material and moral power of action, unity and enthusiasm, but also the result of the mental force of thought, of clarity. In this lies the great importance of such parties or groups based on opinions: that they bring clarity in their conflicts, discussions and propaganda. They are the organs of the self-enlightenment of the working class by means of which the workers find their way to freedom.

Of course such parties are not static and unchangeable. Every new situation, every new problem will find minds diverging and uniting in new groups with new programs. They have a fluctuating character and constantly readjust themselves to new situations.

Compared to such groups, the present workers' parties have an entirely different character, for they have a different objective; they want to seize power for themselves. They aim not at being an aid to the working class in its struggle for emancipation but to rule it themselves and proclaim that this constitutes the emancipation of the proletariat. The Social-Democracy

which arose in the era of parliamentarism conceived of this rule as a parliamentary government. The Communist Party carried the idea of party rule through to its furthest extreme in the party dictatorship.

Such parties, in distinction to the groups described above, must be rigid structures with clear lines of demarcation through membership cards, statutes, party discipline and admission and expulsion procedures. For they are instruments of power—they fight for power, bridle their members by force and constantly seek to extend the scope of their power. It is not their task to develop the initiative of the workers; rather do they aim at training loyal and unquestioning members of their faith. While the working class in its struggle for power and victory needs unlimited intellectual freedom, the party rule must suppress all opinions except its own. In "democratic" parties, the suppression is veiled; in the dictatorship parties, it is open, brutal suppression.

Many workers already realize that the rule of the Socialist or Communist party will be only the concealed form of the rule of a bourgeois class in which the exploitation and suppression of the working class remains. Instead of these parties, they urge the formation of a "revolutionary party" that will really aim at the rule of the workers and the realization of communism. Not a party in the new sense as described above, but a party like those of today, that fight for power as the "vanguard" of the class, as the organization of conscious, revolutionary minorities, that seize power in order to use it for the emancipation of the class.

We claim that there is an internal contradiction in the term: "revolutionary party." Such a party cannot be revolutionary. It is no more revolutionary than were the creators of the *Third Reich.* When we speak of revolution, we speak of the proletarian revolution, the seizure of power by the working class itself.

The "revolutionary party" is based on the idea that the working class needs a group of leaders who vanquish the bourgeoisie for the workers and construct a new government—(note that the working class is not yet considered fit to reorganize and regulate production). But is not this as it should be? As the working class does not yet seem capable of revolution, is it not necessary that the revolutionary vanguard, the party, make the revolution for it? And is this not true as long as the masses willingly endure capitalism?

Against this, we raise the question: what forces can such a party raise for the revolution? How is it able to defeat the capitalist class? Only if the masses stand behind it. Only if the masses rise and through mass attacks, mass struggle, and mass strikes, overthrow the old regime. Without the action of the masses, there can be no revolution.

Two things can follow. The masses remain in action; they do not go home and leave the government to the new party. They organize their power in factory and workshop and prepare for the further conflict in order to defeat capital; through the workers' councils they establish a firm union to take over the complete direction of all society—in other words, they prove that they are not as incapable of revolution as it seemed. Of necessity, then, conflict will arise with the party which itself wants to take power and

which sees only disorder and anarchy in the self-action of the working class. Possibly the workers will develop their movement and sweep out the party. Or, the party, with the help of bourgeois elements defeats the workers. In either case, the party is an obstacle to the revolution because it wants to be more than a means of propaganda and enlightenment; because it feels itself called upon to lead and rule as a party.

On the other hand the masses may follow the party faith and leave to it the further direction of affairs. They follow the slogans from above, have confidence in the new government (as in Germany and Russia) that is to realize communism—and go back home and to work. Immediately the bourgoisie exerts its whole class power the roots of which are unbroken; its financial forces, its great intellectual resources, and its economic power in factories and great enterprises. Against this the government party is too weak. Only through moderation, concessions and yielding can it maintain itself. The excuse is given then, that more cannot be secured at the moment, that it is insanity for the workers to try to force impossible demands. Thus the party deprived of class power becomes the instrument for maintaining bourgeois power.

We said before that the term "revolutionary party" was contradictory from a proletarian point of view. We can state it otherwise: In the term "revolutionary party," "revolutionary" always means a bourgeois revolution. Always, when the masses overthrow a government and then allow a new party to take power, we have a bourgeois revolution—the substitution of a ruling caste by a new ruling caste. It was so in Paris in 1830 when the finance bourgeoisie supplanted the landed proprietors, in 1848 when the industrial bourgeoisie supplanted the financiers, and in 1870 when the combined petty and large bourgeoisie took over the reins.

In the Russian revolution the party bureaucracy came to power as the ruling caste. But in Western Europe and America the bourgeoisie is much more powerfully entrenched in plants and banks, so that a party bureaucracy cannot push them aside as easily. The bourgeoisie in these countries can be vanquished only by repeated and united action of the masses in which they seize the mills and factories and build up their council organizations.

Those who speak of "revolutionary parties" draw incomplete, limited conclusions from history. When the Socialist and Communist parties became organs of bourgeois rule for the perpetuation of exploitation. these well-meaning people merely concluded that they would have to do better. They cannot realize that the failure of these parties is due to the fundamental conflict between the self-emancipation of the working class through its own power and the pacifying of the revolution through a new sympathetic ruling clique. They think they are the revolutionary vanguard because they see the masses indifferent and inactive. But the masses are inactive only because they cannot yet comprehend the course of the struggle and the unity of class interests, although they instinctively sense the great power of the enemy and the immenseness of their task. Once conditions force them into action they will attack the task of self-organization and the conquest of the economic power of capital.

—Anton Pannekoek.

II

The Brain of the Class

The historic role of the working class is the organization of a new system of society, socialism, which will replace capitalism with a world of free, thinking men and women who command the organization of the material means of life, a command over things which will free both society and the individual. The goal of the Anarchist and the Marxist is undoubtedly the same—the freeing of the individual from external authority. And this will become possible only when the individual regards his social tasks as a natural human function like sleeping or breathing and freely and generously gives his energies to increase the social means of existence.

But in working for that goal, the Marxists and Anarchists differ. The Marxists say that the Anarchists are utopian, unpractical, unscientific, sentimental, too much given to the individualistic philosophy. The Anarchists say that the Marxists reproduce in new forms the evils of capitalist politics, particularly the party and the state—and worse, reproduce these authoritarian institutions under the revolutionary banner and in the name of freedom. The truth is that both sides come to exaggerate what they consider to be the defect in the other's position and, inversely, to exaggerate in themselves the defect criticised, which inclines to become the rock upon which all may strain but none may move. While it would be stupid for us to minimize the wide divergence of opinion, it would be no less stupid for us not to see that the Anarchists have something to learn from Marxist science and the Marxists have something to learn from Anarchist individualism.

Comrade Pannekoek, in his article above, opposes the party to the class, and is opposed to the party. He considers that the "belief in parties" is the main reason for the impotence of the working class. He argues that we can choose—party or no party. But this is not the case. Parties do not arise by accident or by whim, but as the political expression of a class or section of a class; that is, as the conscious, written-down, propagated expression of the economic interests of a social class. He is right when he says that the party and factional strife cannot be the cause of dividing and weakening the working class. "The working class is not weak because it is split up—it is split up because it is weak." The existence of great parties like the Social-Democratic Party and Communist Party, the existence of scores of small groups, the emergence of a Fourth International—these are the products of the historic struggles of the proletariat for the conscious expression of its needs—the attempts, the failures, the new beginnings.

It is not permissible even for an Anarchist to separate the economic and political struggles, which are indissolubly combined in real life. It is true that the masses are unaware of this combination and act politically without understanding. We must acknowledge the facts—that the great mass of proletarians live and engage in the class struggle, without being conscious of the struggle, without understanding it; and that a minority of proletarians —the most intelligent, active, honest, courageous—achieve consciousness

of the struggle. The task becomes, how to integrate the conscious minority and the unconscious mass? The conscious minority must come together to form an organization for propaganda, education and organization—a party.

According to Pannekoek's argument, even his "groups which might be called parties, but would be parties in an entirely different sense from those today" would be in opposition to the working class. No matter how they are organized or how named, these propaganda groups or "organs of self-enlightenment" would constitute a party, which would not incorporate the whole mass of the people until society had progressed far on the road to complete socialism and only incorporate a majority at moments of crisis, in a great revolution, and for everyday purposes remain confined to the most active and courageous proletarians. On this side of the revolution, the party can be nothing more than the conscious minority, for the conditions of capitalism stand in the way of educating the masses. The whole educational, propagandist and organizational means are in the hands of the enemy. The revolution will be well under way before the working class is able to seize these means and use them for the real education of the masses.

The class struggle by itself will not educate and organize the masses. If it did, there would be no need for Pannekoek or us to busy ourselves with the question of the political party. It still remains for the conscious minority to enlighten the masses. The masses must learn to think before they act, in action, and after action. The revolution must be a conscious process. The idea that a group of actives, the vanguard, can accomplish a revolution without the assistance of the masses, or even with their momentary aid, is Blanquism, but not Marxism. How make the working class conscious of itself? How can tens of millions of people think and act? Only by means of meetings, newspapers, books, cinemas, radio, etc. — the material organization of thought and action, which the Anarchists themselves cannot do without. And this material organization requires men to speak, write, study, work — these men must be organized — and you have the political party. A party is necessary as the brain of the class, the sensory, thinking and directing apparatus of the class of tens and hundreds of millions of people. And it must represent millions who are unable individually to voice their needs, unable to think clearly, degraded and stupified by capitalist exploitation.

If our problem is not one of—party or no party, it certainly is one of—what kind of party? The social-democratic conception of a parliamentary party and the communist idea of a party dictatorship stand opposed to our conception of the party, as well as to those of Marx and Lenin. Here we reach common ground with comrade Pannekoek, in spite of his fundamental error in flinging the conception of a revolutioary party against the revolution. What kind of party does the working class need? A party which represents the interests of the working class as a whole, and its future, historic interests before its immediate petty interests; a party which does not set itself up above and over against the class, but places itself at the service of the class; a party which puts its loyalty to the class before its loyalty to itself; a party whose policy in every situation represents the real, fundamental interests of the working class as a whole; a party composed

of men and women, the most intelligent, active and honest of their class, absolutely devoted to the interests of the revolution. It was such a party that Lenin strove to create. The present debacle of the Comintern does not show that this conception is incorrect, it shows us the enormous difficulties which we must overcome in educating and organizing the workers as a class. Marxism does not say that the party can replace the class, or do without it, or defy it—and in this Pannekoek agrees with Marxism. The Communist Party is not the application of the Marxist theory, but the application of a distortion of Marxist theory. We are not justified in attacking this distortion and calling that a refutation of Marxism.

The party is the material apparatus for integrating the conscious minority and unconscious mass. The relations between party and class vary with the ups and downs of the struggle, but it is the aim of the party to maintain its correct relation with the class, that relation being the fullest, most all-sided, thought-out-to-the-end expression of the developing needs of the class in its struggle. Further articles would be needed to explain in the necessary detail our opinions on the relations between party and class, the structure of the party, the question of discipline, etc. Here it must suffice to say that the party and class must always be as closely integrated as is humanly devisable; that the structure of the party must be democratic, flexible, allowing for the inclusion in its ranks of many shades of revolutionary opinion, and at the same time sufficiently centralized and disciplined to obtain swift action on a mass and continental scale; that the discipline cannot be dictated from a central committee, for militarization of the party is not in keeping with the conception of socialist organization, and that the well-spring of discipline is the self-discipline of the party member, who is convinced that this is the best possible expression of his class, that this is *his* party in whose activity he fully agrees and fully participates.

It is useless for comrade Pannekoek to wait until "conditions force the working class into action." This means that the battle is lost before it is begun. Against the intellectual resources and material organization of the bourgeoisie we must erect an organization which cannot spring up overnight, because of the nature of things, but which must be created by the struggle of years and decades. We must bring consciousness to the class struggle. We must build the party, the only means of bringing that consciousness.

No Marxist will deny that a conflict exists between party and class, the conscious minority and the unconscious mass. This is what Pannekoek wants us to jump over by washing out the "belief in parties." But these two parts of the same thing cannot be reconciled by refusing to recognize one of them. The misogynist "solves" the love problem by putting women out of his life. The bourgeois professor "solves" the social problem by ignoring the class struggle. The pacifist "solves" the war problem by asking, why fight? But marriage, the class struggle and war go on. The party is a historic creation, which cannot be thrown aside. It has to be recognized as a part of the revolutionary struggle. The task is to use it in the correct manner, to really solve the opposition between party and class by finding the correct methods of integrating them, of obtaining a fruitful conflict instead of a devastating suicidal strife. And in this, the working class

remains the deciding factor. It is the workers, by their own free acceptance, and not the party, by its dictation, which will decide, which party? No, the task is not to get rid of the party, but to struggle for the control of the party by the working class, in opposition to the control of the working class by the party.

—Frank Maitland.

III

From the Bottom Up

The problems raised cannot be approached in an abstract manner and in general terms, but only specifically in regard to concrete historical situations. When Pannekoek said that the "belief in parties" is the main reason for the impotence of the working class, he spoke of parties as they have actually existed. It is obvious that they have not served the working class, nor have they been a tool for ending class rule. In Russia the party became a new ruling and exploiting institution. In Western Europe, parties have been abolished by fascism and have thus proved themselves incapable either of emancipating the workers or of raising themselves into power positions. (The fascist parties cannot be regarded as instruments designed to end the exploitation of labor). In America parties serve not the workers but the capitalists. Parties have fulfilled all sorts of functions, but none connected with the real needs of the workers.

Maitland does not question these facts. Like the Christians who reject criticism with the argument that Christianity has never been tried in earnest, Maitland argues that "the problem is not one of party or no party, but of what kind of party." Even if it is true that hitherto all parties have failed, he thinks that that does not prove that a new party, his "conception of a party," will also fail. It is clear that a "conception of a party" cannot fail merely because real parties have failed. But then "conceptions" do not matter. The party of which he speaks does not exist. His arguments have to be proven in practice; but there is no such practice. All parties that have thus far functioned started out with Maitland's conception of what a party ought to be. This did not hinder them from violating this conception throughout their history.

The party "Lenin strove to create," for instance, and the party he actually created were two different things because Lenin and his party were only parts of history; they could not force history into their own "conceptions." There are other forces in society besides conceptions that shape events. Maitland may be right in saying that the "present debacle of the Comintern does not show that Lenin's conception of the party was incorrect," but the debacle certainly shows that, independent of his conception, the party was indeed "incorrect" if measured by Maitland's ideas and the needs of the international working class.

The party, Maitland maintains, "is a historic creation, which cannot be thrown aside." Unfortunately, that was true in the past. History has also shown, however, that parties were not what they were supposed to be.

They are the historic creation of liberal capitalism and within this particular setting they served—for a time—the needs of the workers, but only incidentally. They were chiefly engaged in building up the group interest and social influence of the party. They became capitalistic institutions, participating in the exploitation of labor and fighting with other capitalistic groups for the control of power positions. Because of general crisis conditions, the concentration of capital, and the centralization of political power, the state apparatus became the most important social power center. A party that got control over the state—either legally or illegally—could transform itself into a new ruling class. This is what parties did or tried to do. Wherever the party succeeded, it did not serve the workers. Just the opposite occurred: the workers served the party. Capitalism, too, is a "historic creation." If the party "cannot be thrown aside because it is a historic creation," how is Maitland going to abolish Capitalism—especially now that it is identical with the one-party state? In reality, both must be "thrown aside"; to end Capitalism today implies the ending of the party.

For Maitland, "the party should be the material apparatus for integrating the conscious minority and unconscious mass." The mass is "unconscious," however, for the same reason that it is powerless. The "conscious" minority could not alter the one situation without changing the other. It cannot bring "consciousness" to the masses unless it brings them power. If the consciousness and the power depend on the party, the whole class struggle question takes on a religious character. If the people that constitute the party are "good" people, they will give the masses power and consciousness; if they are "bad" people they will withhold both. There is no question of "integration" involved here, but only a question of "ethics." Thus we may trust not only in abstract conceptions as to what a party ought to be but also in the goodwill of men. In brief, we must trust our leaders. What parties can give, however, they can also take away. Under conditions as they are, the "consciousness" of the minority is either meaningless, or it is connected with a power position in society. To increase "consciousness" is thus to increase the power of the group that incorporates it. There arises no "integration" between "leaders" and "led"; instead, the existing gap between them widens continuously. The conscious group defends its position as a conscious group; it can defend this position only against the "unconscious" mass. The "integration" of the conscious minority and the unconscious mass is only a pleasanter-sounding description of the exploitation of the many by the few.

The fact that Maitland sees the party as the "material instrument" that co-ordinates thought and action reveals that his mind is still in the past. That is why he advocates the party of the future. The material apparatus (meetings, newspapers, books, cinemas, radio, etc.) of which he speaks has meanwhile ceased to be at the disposal of such parties as Maitland has in mind. The stage of capitalistic development in which parties could grow up like any other business concern and utilize the instruments of propaganda to their own advantage has ended. In present-day society, the development of labor organizations can no longer follow traditional paths. A party that "develops class consciousness in the masses" can no longer arise.

The propaganda means are centralized and at the exclusive service of the ruling class or party. They cannot be used to unseat them. If the workers are not able to develop methods of struggle beyond the control of the ruling groups, they will not be able to emancipate themselves. A party is no weapon against the ruling classes; they do not even exist in fascist societies. Against the present power of the state-party-capital combination only the "conscious action of the whole mass of people" will help. As long as that mass remains "unconscious," as long as it needs the "brain" of a party, this mass will remain powerless, for that "brain" will not develop.

Yet, there is no reason to despair. We can raise another question: What is this "consciousness" that parties supposedly have to bring to the workers? And what is that "unconsciousness" which demands the support of the masses by a separate "brain"—by the party? Is that kind of "consciousness" that we find in parties really necessary in order to change society? Is the lack of such "consciousness" really a hindrance to the change? What has been really dangerous hitherto for the masses and their needs is precisely that "consciousness" that prevails in party organizations. The "consciousness" of which Maitland speaks, as it has been experienced in practice, has nothing whatever to do with a "consciousness" needed to rebel against the present, and to organize a new society. The lack of that sort of consciousness that is nourished by parties is no lack at all as regards the practical needs of the working class.

The workers' job is essentially a simple one. It consists in recognizing that all previously existing ruling groups have hindered the development of a truly social production and distribution; in recognizing the necessity for doing away with production and distribution as determined by the profit- and power-needs of special groups in society who control the means of production and the other social power sources. Production has to be shifted so that it can serve the real needs of the people; it has to become a production for consumption. When these things are recognized, the workers have to act upon them to realize their needs and desires. Little philosophy, sociology, economics and political science are needed to recognize those simple things and to act upon the recognition. The actual class struggle is here decisive and determining. But in the practical field of revolutionary and social activities the "conscious" minority is no better informed than the "unconscious" majority. Rather the opposite is true. This has been proven in all actual revolutionary struggles. Any factory organization, furthermore, will be better able than an outside party to organize its production. There is enough non-party intelligence in the world to co-ordinate social production and distribution without the help or interference of parties specialized in ideological fields. The party is a foreign element in social production just as the capitalist class was an unnecssary third factor to the two needed for the carrying on of the social life: means of production and labor. The fact that parties participate in class struggles indicates that those class struggles do not tend towards a socialistic goal. Socialism finally means nothing more than the elimination of that third factor that stands between the means of production and labor. The "consciousness" developed by

parties is the "consciousness" of an exploiting group struggling for the possession of social power. If it would propagate a "socialist consciousness" it must first of all do away with the party concept and with the parties themselves.

The "consciousness" to rebel against and to change society is not developed by the "propaganda" of conscious minorities, but by the real and direct propaganda of events. The increasing social chaos endangers the habitual life of greater and ever greater masses of people and changes their ideologies. So long as minorities operate as separate groups within the mass, the mass is not revolutionary, but neither is the minority. Its "revolutionary conceptions" can still serve only capitalistic functions. If the masses become revolutionary, the distinction between conscious minority and unconscious majority disappears, and also the capitalistic function of the apparently "revolutionary consciousness" of the minority. The division between a conscious minority and an unconscious majority is itself historical. It is of the same order as the division between workers and bosses. Just as the difference between workers and bosses tends to disappear in the wake of unsolvable crisis conditions and in the social levelling process connected therewith, so the distinction between conscious minority and unconscious mass will also disappear. Where it does not disappear we will have a fascist society.

"Integration" can only mean helping to do away with the distinction between conscious minority and unconscious mass. Within classes and within society differences will remain between people. Some will be more energetic than others, some cleverer than others, etc. There will remain a division of labor. That these real differences froze into differences between capital and labor, into differences between party and mass, is due merely to historically conditioned specific production relations, to the capitalist mode of production. This distinction as regards *social activity* must be ended. If one sees the need for "integration" he has to approach the problem in quite a different manner from Maitland. The "integration" has to go on not from the top down—where the party brings consciousness to the mass—but from the bottom up, where the class keeps all its intelligence and energy to itself, and does not isolate and thus capitalize it in separate organizations.

Production is social. All people, whatever they are or whatever they do, are, in a socially determined society, equally important. Their actual integration, not the "ideological integration" through the traditional party-mass relationship, is required. But this real integration, the human solidarity that is necessary in order to put an end to the misery of the world, must be fostered now. It can be developed only by destroying the forces which operate against it. Class solidarity and class actions can arise not with, but only against, group and party interests.

—Paul Mattick.

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The Editor Sums Up

The Party and Consciousness

Pannekoek, Mattick and Maitland, despite their polar differences, all proceed from the same erroneous premise of traditional Marxism, i. e., the inevitability of Socialism. However, while Maitland continues to follow the "orthodox" application of the theory of inevitability, Pannekoek and Mattick have diverged. Maitland espouses the Marx-Engels thesis that the inevitable victory of Socialism is not an automatic product of the class struggle, but demands the intervention of a party with the will to power. Specifically, Maitland defends the Leninist "leadership" party whose function it is to stimulate the movement of the workers along the revolutionary path and "guide" them to victory. Pannekoek-Mattick, on the other hand, conceive of Socialist consciousness arising out of the class struggle itself. For them revolutionary consciousness is not merely inevitable, it is spontaneous, and comes into being when the social temperature reaches 212°, — like water turning into steam.

Starting from this premise, Pannekoek and Mattick reject the party as a necessary element for proletarian victory. Mattick holds that parties can only play a bourgeois role and are essentially anti-working class in character. To Pannekoek, the existence of parties and the workers' belief in them is the main reason for working class impotence. Indeed, Pannekoek's concession of a certain useful function to "ideological groupings" serves only to underline his confusion on this score.

We find ourselves in basic disagreement with both the "orthodox" position of Maitland and the Pannekoek-Mattick deviation. It is true that parties have played a not inconsiderable role in reducing the proletariat to its present sorry plight. But Pannekoek confuses cause and effect when he attributes to the party *per se* the primary responsibility for the debacle of the proletariat. Belief in, or reliance upon, parties is an *effect* of the acceptance of capitalist ideology by the working class. As Pannekoek himself points out, "they (the workers) cannot yet comprehend the course of the struggle and the unity of class interests," which is but another way of saying that the workers lack an independent class ideology. Under such circumstances it follows that today, parties with any sort of following will necessarily reflect the confusion of the working class. However, it is not the parties that are responsible for the confusion; quite the contrary, only a party, based upon correct principles, is capable of providing the light necessary for dispelling confusion. Pannekoek glimpses this truth when he demonstrates that the party need not be a power-vanguard organization, that it can also function as a non-power, non-leadership, ideological group-

ing in the interests of working class enlightenment. His failure to grasp the vital role to be played by such a party stems from his erroneous concept of the nature of Socialist consciousness.

Basically, Mattick and Pannekoek confuse trade union consciousness with Socialist consciousness. Trade union consciousness is to the proletariat what *class consciousness* was to the bourgeoisie. Just as it was clear to the rising bourgeoisie that they were being "unjustly" hemmed in by feudal restrictions, and that they ought to have political representation commensurate with their growing economic power, so it is equally apparent to the working class that they need unions to defend themselves against ruthless capitalist exploitation. But there they stop; unlike the revolutionary bourgeoisie of old, the workers regard the system which enslaves them as the best of all possible systems, the system of "free" enterprise, individual liberty and democracy. In short, the working class has not developed an independent class ideology but continues, in that sphere, an appendage of the bourgeoisie. As Lenin has pointed out in his *What Is To Be Done?*—

> "The history of all countries shows that the working class, exclusively by its own effort, is able to develop only trade-union consciousness, i. e., it may itself realize the necessity for combining in unions, to fight against the employer and to strive to compel the government to pass necessary labor legislation, etc.
>
> "The theory of Socialism, however, grew out of the philosophic, historical and economic theories that were elaborated by the educated representatives of the propertied classes, the intellectuals. The founders of modern scientific Socialism, Marx and Engels, themselves belonged to the bourgeois intelligentsia."

Before Lenin, Kautsky made the same distinction:

> ". . . In this connection Socialist consciousness is represented as a necessary and direct result of the proletarian class struggle. But this is absolutely untrue. Of course, Socialism, as a theory has its roots in a modern economic relationship in the same way as the class struggle of the proletariat has, and in the same way as the latter emerges from the struggle against the capitalist-created poverty and misery of the masses. But Socialism arises side by side with the class struggle and not one out of the other; each arises out of different premises. Modern Socialist consciousness can arise only on the basis of a profound scientific knowledge. Indeed, modern economic science is as much a condition of production as, say, modern technology and the proletariat can create neither one nor the other, no matter how much it may desire to do so; both arise out of the modern social process. The vehicles of science are not the proletariat but the *bourgeois intelligentsia*: It was out of the heads of the members of this stratum that Modern Socialism originated, and it was they who communicated it to the more intellectually developed proletarians who, in their turn introduce it to the proletarian class struggle from without and not something that arises from within it spontaneously." . . .

The limitations of trade union consciousness and the inability of Pannekaek's "conditions" and Mattick's "real and direct propaganda of events" to *spontaneously* transform the class instinct of the proletariat into Socialist understanding and consciousness is underlined by the failure of the "revolutionary situations" which have developed from time to time, to materialize. We need only mention the 1920 seizure of the factories in Northern Italy, the 1926 British General Strike, the 1936 French "Lock Out" movement, etc. Here we had spontaneously developed social crises which overnight transformed the placid social-economic atmosphere into one charged with revolutionary dynamite. The social barometer rose to an "alarming" degree. The very foundations of capitalist society heretofore considered impregnable, were threatened. But the storm blew over. "Order" and social calm were restored. Wherein lay the reason for the overwhelming defeats suffered by the workers on these historic occasions? We are told that the proletariat was betrayed by the treachery of the Labor Leaders acting in conjunction with the party. True, the Labor Leaders and the party played a Judas role. BUT IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE THE WORKING CLASS LACKED AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE BOURGEOIS CHARACTER OF THE PARTY AND THE LABOR LEADERS THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE, IN THE FIRST PLACE, TO BETRAY IT.

This is not to deprecate the importance of the role of "conditions" and of the social pressure, which the "real and direct propaganda of events" generate. These forces play an important part in developing Socialist consciousness in that they help to bring forth the latent class instinct of the proletariat. But class instinct is purely a negative factor, it cannot of itself (sans education and organization) develop into Socialist consciousness by means of the warmth and pressure of the increasing social temperature. To borrow an analogy from the field of electricity: To complete the revolutionary circuit it is necessary to link up the negative pole of class instinct with the positive pole of Socialist understanding and consciousness.

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In opposing the Pannekoek-Mattick thesis, we by no means accept Maitland's defense of the traditional "power-vanguard" party. However, Maitland is on solid ground in taking issue with Pannekoek and insisting that the class struggle by itself will not educate and organize the workers; that the "conscious" minority must bring consciousness to the class struggle. But Maitland's "consciousness" consists in blind faith and obedience to a sacrosanct Party. He conceives the masses as incapable of independent action and bluntly denies that they can be educated this side of the revolution and even after the revolution "is well under way." Hence, according to Maitland, there is the need for the party to act as the "protector" of millions of workers "who are unable to think clearly, degraded and stupefied by capitalist exploitation."

Paradoxically, Maitland and Mattick have a common bond. Both reject *education*—as distinct from experience obtained in the course of the class struggle—as a primary factor in the development of Socialist consciousness. Maitland considers the proletariat incapable of education, while Mattick dismisses education as of little or no importance. He reasons that the

(*Continued on inside page, back cover*)

A Personal Re-Interpretation of Socialist Aims and Methods

By George W. Hartmann

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EVERY sensitive adult is aware that the entire world is passing through a deep and prolonged cultural crisis. Yet it is easy to exaggerate the emergency character of this immense social transformation. My life span falls entirely within the twentieth century—which, from 1904 on, has moved from one international "crisis" to another. As an adolescent, I witnessed, and in some measure, participated in, the agonies of World War I; as a young man about to establish a family, I was victimized along with countless others by the repercussions of the Great Depression; and now as a fully mature adult, another cataclysm unrolls itself before my eyes. Small wonder that I now feel crisis-hardened, and that a heaping up of such group catastrophes (not personal misfortunes, I hasten to add) leaves me not dazed and indifferent but more collected in the face of fresh disasters than I would have deemed possible. I suggest, therefore, that we toughen our spirits to meet the onset of the bigger miseries that seem in store for the race—for all the evidence at hand points to this as the Century of Cumulative Crises with few, if any, parallels in human history.

All this reminds me of a conversation I had with a Nazi university student in Berlin in 1930. He said that a basic difference between young Germans like himself and an American liberal or non-sectarian Socialist like myself was that he had prepared himself to look upon war, struggle, revolutionary upheaval, and conflict as the norm or standard of existence, whereas I retained a "Victorian" mental set which considered peaceful and orderly development to be the rule in societal relations, and war and other mass tragedies as rare and preventable exceptions. There was a certain shrewd aptness in this diagnosis, and I must confess that the last decade at least has given far more encouragement to his view than to mine. Certainly every basic value that a Democratic Socialist cherishes has been defeated and rejected in the turmoil of recent years; other non- or anti-Socialist forces retain their domination and have even increased their grip on the minds of men.

This I believe to be a correct description of the objective social situation. To one who has identified himself with the Socialist cause, the current scene may be a stimulus to either profound melancholy or to philosophic equanimity, depending upon one's emotional organization and personality structure. There are different ways of reacting to such a peculiarly intense

and pervasive form of frustration. Each may well have its own psychological validity. *Some* adjustment to severe thwarting must, of course, be made. Without expressing exaggerated confidence in the healthiness of my particular form of adaptation, I shall outline below what seems to me to be the most rational and defensible stand at the moment.

The substance of the Socialist Dream remains as sound as ever. To work for the establishment of a World Federation of Cooperative Commonwealths; to make Peace, Plenty, and Freedom the lot of all men everywhere; to labor for the universal abolition of poverty, vice, crime, war, ignorance, and disease through the application of intelligence, kindliness, and courage to all human problems—such goals still embody the highest values of our race. So long as we are constituted to prefer beauty to ugliness and truth to falsehood, just so long must Socialism—the name we give to this picture of a more just order of affairs—continue to appeal to the minds and hearts of men.

So-called "realists" and "practical" folk often pour scorn upon this vision. They condemn it as an idle secular modification of religious millenarianism. Only perverted and distorted mentalities, unacquainted with the nature of things, will waste time, energy, and other resources in the futile effort to create the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. They advise us to be thankful that life is no worse than it is, to stop worrying about matters beyond any one person's control, to attend strictly to our own private business, and to forget any feelings of uneasiness one may have about the cruelties, the stupidities, and the absurdities of human relations today. What one is powerless to change, one must accept—so runs their admonition.

Some such mood often overcomes "tired radicals" as well as congenital cultural reactionaries, if there be such. It is, like every other phenomenon, thoroughly understandable once we know the forces that produce the result. Nonetheless, it is untenable because the desire for more satisfactory experiences is the central dynamic of all behavior. Man does strive to improve both himself and his environment—not consistently and wisely, to be sure, yet not altogether sporadically and foolishly. The old "human nature" argument which used to be thought such a basic objection to Socialism paradoxically turns out to be the most solid foundation upon which it can build. So long as we are dissatisfied with less than the very best in political and economic organization, just as long must the Socialist critique of the existing order serve to motivate the quest for the one culture pattern which most truly approximates the ideal.

BARRIERS TO THE EMERGENCE OF A SOCIALIST CULTURE

Because of this orientation, I cannot help but view the world-wide decline in Socialist strength since 1914 as no more than a grave but temporary defeat. The principal source of this downward phase of the cycle of progress I find in the complexities of group motivation. In their present stage of mental development, most men, I am convinced, genuinely want Socialism once they know what it is—but at the moment they want other things more. The difficulty boils down to a question of relative values, choice being determined by the comparative strength of the impulses in-

volved. The tragedy of the international Socialist movement in 1914 was that when the test came, close nationalist feelings were actually more dominant even among the enlightened "proletariat" than the remoter ties of cosmopolitan fraternity. *The same condition holds today.* Hitler's and Roosevelt's appeals both rest upon the widespread public attachment to these "regional" sentiments. It is a regrettable, but nevertheless literal psychological truth, that most "Socialists" discovered that they were more German than Socialist, more British than Socialist, more Jewish than Socialist, more American than Socialist, more anti-alien than Socialist—in short, actually more *anti*-Socialist than *pro*-Socialist! So long as these deep-seated racial, religious, or nationalist ties were irrelevant, negligible, and out of the focus of consciousness, such persons could think of themselves as Socialists; but the moment the old and the new values thus symbolized came into conflict, one or the other "good" had to be subordinated. Even if the clash internally in the realm of belief and externally in the field of behavior was often imaginary, fictitious, and a complete misapprehension of the problem, the ultimate effect was much the same as though a real opposition of loyalties existed. The fact that the Socialist phase generally lost out is not surprising, considering that it is the latest and least firmly established feature in the mature individual's system of attitudes.

This analysis of the psychological make-up of the average Socialist in all countries during the past fifty years has so far emphasized his emotional identification with other groups than the most inclusive of all, viz., mankind itself. Purely intellectual factors, however, necessarily add their vital contribution to conduct. It is doubtful if an authentically democratic socialism can be achieved with public consent and support until a substantially higher level of both *general* and *special* education is reached. Stated bluntly, the Socialist State cannot safely rest upon the franchise of people with no more than a sixth-grade education on the average. How much more schooling in years would be required, I cannot say with assurance; but I should not be surprised if it turned out to be at the minimum a junior college training *or its equivalent.* I hasten to add that the *kind* of education available to the public is far more important than the *amount* measured in such terms as semesters and courses, and that critical reflection upon experience and participation in constructive endeavor is probably more educative than exclusive reliance upon the traditional books of the classical curriculum. Moreover, the methods and spirit of true education must be sharply distinguished from propaganda—a distinction which I fear that most persons, including most Socialists, must still learn to make. The role of "schooling," broadly interpreted, is absolutely crucial to any plans for ordered advance.

Perhaps all I have succeeded in conveying so far is the impression that the chief reasons for our apparent failure to achieve Socialism are to be found in the limitations of Socialists themselves. Of course, this is not the only reason; neither is it an unimportant factor. The Socialist viewpoint needs to be embodied in a much more consistent set of attitudes than has often been the case in the past. Absence of complete integration of beliefs tends to block the attainment of higher values by unduly exalting lower ones. Note the following:

CONSTITUENTS OF A FULL-BODIED SOCIALISM

Socialism, as a *complete* structure, may be likened to a regular pentagon, each one of its five sides being required to create the full symmetrical figure. These are: (1) *humanitarianism* without any reservations; (2) *pacifism* or "internationalism" in the sense of principled opposition to *all* wars, foreign or civil; (3) *cooperation* or collective control of resources for the purpose of producing and distributing goods and services in the light of fundamental human needs; (4) *science* and art as methodical guides to the solution of technical problems; and (5) *democracy* as embodied in such crystallizations as "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" and "government *of* the people, *by* the people, *for* the people." It is my solemn conviction that no one of these five conceptions can be fully realized without more or less simultaneously realizing the other four—they all are, in the fullest sense of the word, *interdependent* objectives. One cannot be bought at the price of another without losing both; more accurately, not a single one of these coherent phases can be sacrificed in the hope of reaching or retaining one or more of the rest without the eventual loss of all. Organically, they belong together; they spring from the same sources in our common life; combined, they point toward the only rational goal of human endeavor and the sole way to get there.

Unless Socialism serves to raise the level of happiness of the average man, it is a snare and delusion. If this were not true, all Socialist thought and action would be pointless. Certainly the sad lesson of the totalitarian tyrannies is that ends and means must be harmonized, otherwise the only "value" that emerges and endures is the limited enjoyment of vast power over their enslaved fellow men by a few distorted mentalities. As I see it, a Socialist ceases to be such—in whole and not just in part—as soon as he (1) condones and engages in *inhumane* conduct; (2) thinks exclusively or primarily in *nationalist* or "in-group" terms; (3) accepts *competition* as the road to economic well-being; (4) is deliberately non-scientific or *anti-scientific* in disregarding the findings of any forms of research; and (5) tolerates or endorses any *authority* that is essentially *despotic*, no matter whether this be dictatorship in home, school, factory, union, party, church, club, or any other form of human association.

Some readers may be tempted to remark that this is an impossibly high ideal to hold before any one of human flesh and blood; that it is utterly Utopian, purist, and perfectionist; and that it is a noble vision, perhaps, of one who has his "head in the clouds" but who has forgotten to keep his "feet on the earth." Yet every one of these five aspects has been an integral part of the Socialist heritage for more than a century. The least deep-seated of all is probably the anti-war aspect—it may be that that is why it has now become the most important. Yet the "No more War!" note has never been completely absent at any time, even when most partial or fragmentary Socialists had donned military uniforms, and slaughtered each other just as stupidly as non- or anti-Socialist soldiers. Perhaps the uncertainty whether the *Klassenkampf* of Marx's and Engels' German writings was to be translated "class *war*" or "class *struggle*" contributed to this

tragic outcome; possibly the unanalyzed stereotype that the Great Revolution was to occur amid the din of armed conflict (instead of being a "dry" revolution) contributed its share to the confusion; more likely, the irrational fears and hates which the grave insecurities of modern living produce, are ultimately responsible. In any event, at the risk of being accused of gross dogmatism, I firmly believe that a Socialist today—whatever may have been the case before 1942—must be a pacifist or cease to be a Socialist. If this requires a redefinition of the concept, then I strongly urge that the new definition be made because it is a much overdue modification. The inherent organic interdependence of ends and means—logically, psychologically, yea even technically—makes it forever impossible that any good Socialist result can be produced by war of any kind whatsoever.

SOME UNCONVENTIONAL DOUBTS

In the light of this strongly "revisionist" interpretation, it must be clear that I find little satisfaction in being orthodox—indeed, I suspect that whatever delight I have in being a heterodox Socialist is traceable to some congenital non-conformist strain in my makeup. Though I personally prefer to be a latitudinarian, I respect the honest sectarian because his humorless insistence upon small or unimportant points represents a value that ought not be lost. To be sure a rigid and unbending Marxism can be as offensive as strait-laced Catholicism or fanatical fundamentalism. Yet the historical facts do not justify one in insisting that recent events have revealed its utter "bankruptcy." Given enough time—say the span of centuries still to come—and some, if not all phases, of the original doctrine concerning the future of the economic system may be literally fulfilled. One can be an effective prophet and yet find that things do not happen quite as one prophesied. Predestinarianism is not an essential article in the Socialist creed. One can be right as to the whole and yet wrong on all the parts! That capitalism is being transformed under our very eyes is a dead certainty—but that socialism (in my special sense) will necessarily supplant it does not follow; to the extent that they neglect these other, viz, fascist, "managerial," and allied possibilities, the "inevitability" people are clearly wrong. Yet paradoxically enough, in the long run, they may be right. There may be a "natural" goal towards which things move. Thus, eliminate racism, nationalism, imperialism, militarism, etc., from Nazism and install full civil liberties with a classic and liberal Bill of Rights, and the productive and distributive structure that remains might not be a bad foundation for the next step toward socialism. To this extent I agree with Freda Utley in believing that the present German organization (Oct., 1941) for all its abominable crimes, contains more hope for the future of at least European mankind than the degenerate Soviet system. I hope no one reads me out of the synagogue for entertaining this view.

In our day, national economies may perish through military disaster brought on by an external foe, but taking the world as a whole, it is doubtful if economic "systems" ever really collapse. They may be cruel, inefficient, stupid, and all but intolerable to the masses; yet so long as they succeed in providing enough goods and services to keep people alive, they can go on

indefinitely. It is only to the degree that these "masses" can form a mental image of a superior order of things above the level of minimum essentials where most of the extant deprivations will be unnecessary, and to the degree that they are *genuinely* dissatisfied with the *status quo*, that the *possibility* of a substitute exists. This *potentiality* becomes a *reality* as soon as power and control over the necessary conditions of change is placed in the hands of persons so minded. This reality in turn yields to another as soon as the "improvers" are able to do their work. This psychological or educational interpretation of socialism is, in my present opinion, the only substantially correct one, although in affirming this, I do not wish to deny the secondary but distinctly real contribution made by strictly "physical" factors such as the distribution of natural resources.

THE AGENTS OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT

Certainly the outlook here sketched is not compatible with a blind faith in an amorphous segment of the population called the "workers." Labor—skilled or unskilled, organized or unorganized—has done too many vicious things for one to hold that merely because it is labor it will do what is good and wise for all. On the contrary, I suspect that in this country there is *proportionately* more good human material for a Socialist Commonwealth among millionaires than there is among persons on relief. Being utterly miserable and constantly worried about where the next meal is coming from is not a state of affairs conducive to that reflective criticism which is the only valid starting point for the Socialist reconstruction of our institutions. Logically, this compels one to declare that the bourgeoisie are better material for the Socialist message than the proletariat—and this, too, I also believe. This is inadequate evidence for the position just outlined, but we do know that Norman Thomas won relatively more support for his Presidential candidacies in 1932 and 1936 among intellectuals and college communities than he did in purely industrial and "labor" centers. The immediate goal is too pressing for the latter group, whereas the former are (in some small measure) both able and willing to emphasize the remoter goal—a prerequisite to any form of Socialist planning. Certainly the Socialist appeal cannot be "for Workers only"; it must be directed to all rational men of good will everywhere.

The integration of forces that best serves to advance the ideals here implied seems to me to require that the Socialist Party be not just a political vehicle but, to some degree, a learned and professional society infused not only with technical understanding but with a religious passion. The existing Socialist Party may or may not be or become such an instrument. But the presence of some similar body of Open Conspirators seeking to persuade others, even if they are not permitted to administer the primary enterprises of the culture is, in my judgment, absolutely indispensable to orderly progress.

Letter from Dwight MacDonald

Dear Abraham Ziegler:—

I've read the first issue of *Modern Socialism* with much interest and some agreement. The main article, "The Crisis in Marxism," is a good job; its criticism of "traditional, tactical" Marxism is often fresh and acute and always argued in concrete historical terms (in refreshing contrast to the abstract-logical approach of such current critics of Marxism as Burnham and Eastman). Marxism is not a philosophical system, after all, but rather an approach to history, and it stands or falls, from the scientific point of view, not on the validity of the dialectic but rather on its ability to explain and interpret specific historical situations.

There are several important issues on which I disagree with you. Before raising them, I'd like to make a few criticisms of Modern Socialism as "a journal of revolutionary re-education." The most obvious weakness of the first issue is that it's apparently entirely written by the editor. It's thus a pamphlet rather than a "journal." The first function of such a magazine must be to draw into its discussions a group of contributors who will argue out in its pages the problems facing the revolutionary movement today. One man cannot very well discuss with himself; in fact, he would be better advised to present his ideas in book form, or to spread them by contributing to already existing magazines. (I should think that *Living Marxism*, for example, would have been glad to print the main article in this issue.) The other basic criticism I would make is that there is too much argumenta- To other basic criticism I would make is that there is too much argumentation tion and not enough documentation. The Editor describes himself as a "reformed sectarian," but I should like to see the reform go farther. As something of a "reformed sectarian" myself, I'd say that the greatest service that can be rendered the revolutionary movement today by a journal like *Modern Socialism* would be to print primarily articles which survey, synthesize and analyze a given body of data rather than the kind of "theoretical" articles that have become so characteristic of the sectarian press.

I can't see the logic of your line on the war, which seems to be to oppose Roosevelt-Churchill from a workingclass basis up to the point where the Nazis actually "invade" the "nation," and to support Roosevelt-Churchill after this point is reached. I put those two words in quotes because (1) invasion—that is the breaching of the frontier of country A by country B—seems to me a purely military-tactical concept, without important social or moral implications, and hence I can't accept it as the basis for determining revolutionary policy; and (2) I don't see any difference between your use of the concept, "nation," and the traditional social-patriotic use of the term.

I am happy to correct my sweeping generalization, that "prior to the Russian Revolution all shades of Socialist opinion (including Lenin) were agreed that the coming Russian Revolution could only be a bourgeois revolution." I overlooked Trotsky's formulation of the "permanent revolution." However, I can not agree that Bolshevism is entitled to any great credit as a school of historical interpretation. Macdonald errs in characterizing Lenin as a critic of Marx's stand on workingclass consciousness. On the contrary, Lenin was at all times the most consistent and determined proponent of Marx's ideas on this subject. Perhaps the fault is my own for failing to make my original point with sufficient clarity.*

THE ROLE OF TRANSITIONAL DEMANDS

Macdonald's Trotskyist transitional demands is none other than the old hag, immediate demands with her face lifted. Macdonald attempts to distinguish between admittedly reformist immediate demands and transitional demands on the ground that transitional demands are drastic enough to require a basic change in society if they are to be achieved. But the worker is not sufficiently astute to make this distinction for himself and if it is pointed out to him then wherein is the value of the strategical maneuver in reaching the backward worker which Macdonald stresses? If the distinction is not pointed out to the worker and he is misled to believe that he can improve his position within the framework of Capitalism, is he not being deceived and politically tricked? Is he then being told the facts of life about Capitalism as Macdonald puts it?

We are told that the raising of transitional demands is an "educational process"; the workers learn by experience that Capitalism can not grant even their most elementary demands for security and consequently they embrace the revolutionary road of struggle against Capitalism itself. Here Macdonald is confusing Lenin's philosophy of political amoralism based upon partial demands with Trotsky's subsequent formulation of transitory demands. That this "experience" is far from being as efficacious as is contended is borne out by the actual experience of the German and the British Labor movement. In Germany, after fifty years of this kind of experience it was not the Socialist revolution which triumphed, but rather the Fascist counter-revolution. In Great Britain, after experiencing the impotency of two Labor Governments in office, Socialist consciousness today was never at a lower ebb. The working class has not the time for fifty years more of this type of experience. The truth is that transitional demands no different from immediate demands or Leninist partial demands, serve to impregnate the workers with fatal illusions as to the real class nature of the Capitalist state. Instead of educating the workers, such demands play directly into the hands of the class enemy by strengthening the Capitalist psychology of the workers.

By defending the Trotskyist transitonial demands Macdonald finds himself in the incongruous position of rejecting the Marxian dogma of inevitability but at the same time clinging to its fountainhead, the traditional Marxist concept that political experience and "movement" is the generator of Socialist consciousness.

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*See the discussion: *The Role of The Party*, and our summation.

The Crisis of Capitalism and Revolutionary Marxism

By Hugo Oehler

THE second world war brings out in bold relief the crisis of Capitalism, the inability of the exploiters to solve their problem of overproduction on a peaceful plane, and the fact that no matter which way the exploiters turn, from bourgeois democracy to Fascism, they run into an impasse that can be traced back to the very foundation of the capitalist mode of production. It is clear to any student of history that Capitalism has reached the stage where it has become a brake upon further development of mankind. Its tremendous scientific developments are driven into blind alleys while mankind lives and dies in the most degrading manner.

This contradiction between gigantic productive forces and the inability of society to use them for the good of mankind has shaken the very foundation of the ideological structure of all those who had faith in Capitalism. Science moves back toward religion and idealism; the theory of individual freedom becomes replaced by regimentation; the theory of a "chicken in every pot" and plenty for all becomes "organized starvation."

Over two dozen imperialist conflicts and wars and an equal number of revolutions since the first world war have had profound negative effects upon bourgeois theory and practice.

THE EFFECTS OF THE CRISIS UPON THE WORKING CLASS

Hand in hand with the crisis among the ruling exploiters there developed a crisis within the labor movement, because the ideological leadership of the labor movement has been dominated by a different variety of agents of the exploiters in the ranks of the working class. The trade union leaders' "struggle" for crumbs and for the defense of Capitalism against Communism: the Second International's theory of "gradualism," of "evolution"—toward Socialism; together with the Stalinist Third International's non-Marxist theory of nationalism and Socialism in one country have sapped the class energy and blunted its struggle against exploitation. Nowhere since the early twenties has a leadership in opposition to these agents of Capitalism been able to rally a mass movement, except in the Spanish Civil War, and here it fell into the hands of the Anarcho-Syndicalists who capitulated to the "democratic" bourgeoisie, thereby negating the effectiveness of the struggle.

Mr. Oehler is the National Secretary of the Revolutionary Workers League, U. S., a dissident Trotskyist-Leninist grouping. The author's views in no manner reflect those of the Editor, who decisively rejects Leninism and its dogmas.

Now the devastating effects of the new world war are again shaking the labor movement to the very bottom. The Second International collapsed with the first blows of the war. The Stalinists have swung entirely over to the worst form of social-patriotism. The centrist groups such as the Trotskyites have been split wide open over principled questions. All of the smaller groups have been liquidatd, except the organizations affiliated to the International Contact Commission, such as the Revolutionary Workers League.

THE "REVOLUTIONISTS" GO HOME

Organizations with any set of theories can stand up when the sailing is easy and there is peace, but let the first storms of imperialist war or revolution blow up and theories not based upon objective reality, that is, theoretical positions contrary to revolutionary Marxism, will crash to the ground and create a crisis. Armed with revisionism in the false name of Marxism many capable and sincere workers and intellectuals lost their bearings and have, in fright, run for cover—back to the defense of the fatherland. Naturally, considering themselves intelligent, fearless and capable they had to find the "reason," and obtained the excuse that there is nothing wrong with themselves, there is something wrong with Marxism. But what they called Marxism was in reality only a smattering of Marxian "education" through reading and memorizing Marxian literature but not understanding the theoretical structure of Marxism in theory and practice.

Nothing was wrong (?) with the person who went home until "things blow over" or the person who joins the Fatherland "against Fascism." Something was wrong with Marxism, they say. They join hands with the paid journalist prostitutes of Capitalism, to war against Dialectical Materialism and Marxism. One of the most important theoretical fights of the day is the new war against revolutionary Marxism and Dialectics. Because the real rulers understand that if the revisionist and reformist are replaced with revolutionary Marxism in cadres with mass influence the days of the robber barons will be numbered.

When we speak of the crisis in the labor movement we refer to the LEADERSHIP of the labor movement and not the rank and file, who are misled. There is the other side of this problem, and the more important side too. While the decay of Capitalism carries with it a crisis of the labor agents in our ranks and the organizations they control, this same crisis, as it deepens, as it sweeps away all the old mile posts that the bourgeois ideology ground into the workers' minds, also turns to its opposite. It creates a swifter motion in the workers' ranks, it creates motion toward strikes and revolutions—as the direction toward the workers' solution. This upheaval is what the labor leaders fear. They do everything to control it and keep it in safe channels. The series of revolutions since the October seizure of power is living proof of this, as are the lesser, but important strike waves in the United States.

It can be said with certainty that for every thousand dollars revolutionary organizations collect in pennies and dimes from the workers, the labor leaders spend a hundred thousand dollars to smash the progressive

groups, to smash the strikes, to beat down the revolutionists, to clear the ground of any growth of revolutionary cadres. This money spent by the agents of the bosses is in turn only a small part of what the Capitalist class and the state spend for the same purpose. Against these odds revolutionary Marxism fights and grows. Many fall by the wayside, unable to keep up the pace, but they blame it—on Marxism.

MUST WE OVERHAUL MARXISM?

The confused claim that it is a crisis in Marxism. The enemies of the working class, on the other hand, fight revolutionary Marxism as their most dangerous rival. We categorically reject all positions that claim there is a crisis in Marxism. There is a crisis of Capitalism, which is reflected in the labor movement and especially reflected in the revisionist or sectarian movements that claim to be Marxian, but in reality are centrist or reformist. There is no need to overhaul the theories of Scientific Socialism, of Marxism. But there is a need of these panicky and confused persons to overhaul their own "principles," to burn out of their minds bourgeois theories and ideology. They must reexamine the fundamentals of Marxism with an unbiased mind. They must throw out of their minds a considerable amount of their "new" but false psychological ideas and subordinate practical psychological concepts within the framework of HISTORICAL MATERIALISM as an auxiliary factor.

No one can deny that the defeats and betrayals of two dozen or more revolutions since the October revolution have bled white the flower of the working class. But a scientific examination of each and every revolution spoken of, as well as the "development" of the Soviet Union under Stalinism will reveal that *in no cases were the principles of Marxism applied by the organizations that dominated the mass movement.* The mass movement was ready to take over power, the workers wanted to smash the exploiters' system, the workers were ready to follow an honest and clear thinking leadership through hell in order to rid this earth of the exploitation of man by man. That is, to solve their own individual problem which was a minute part of this problem.

It can also be stated, without fear of contradiction, and through proof of investigation that *where Marxism has been applied, working class success has been obtained.* The October Revolution was the outstanding result of this policy. But the critic will reply that the examples are not sufficient, that if Marxism is so correct then why has it not been able to make more headway? It is unfortunate, but true, that just because a position is scientific and correct, it does not automatically follow that it will make over false ideas and sweep the world. The whole history of the development of mankind reveals a slow hard struggle, often lasting over many centuries, a struggle against ignorance and stupidity, fostered by the ruling class which would be hurt by the scientific ideas. And history also reveals that sooner or later these correct ideas would begin to gain ground. The next step of the master class and its ideological prison, the church, would be to "take over" the ideas—that is, take them over in name but warp the content. So too, with revolutionary Marxism after the Communist Manifesto re-

vealed its correctness and the Paris Commune pointed out the way. Today this two-fold struggle against revolutionary Marxism continues with all the fury of the centuries of the struggle of science against ignorance fostered by those who benefit by the exploitation of man.

We do not need a "revolutionary re-education" of Marxism, which means a revision of Marxism. We need a return to a scientific approach. Theory based upon facts and practice, and practice based upon correct revolutionary theory. This is Marxism.

THE THEORETICAL SYSTEM OF MARXISM

An understanding and application of revolutionary Marxism to the class struggle and to the situation confronting mankind is the *only way out*, the only road to a higher social order, to socialism. But in order to apply revolutionary Marxism one must know what is scientific and what is revision. We therefore list the principal points of the theoretical structure taking our quotation from Engels and from the 14 points of the *International Contact Commission.*

1—*

2—The Defense of the Soviet Union:

"The Dictatorship of the Proletariat still remains in the Soviet Union although in warped form, with a rising bourgeois stratum within the bureaucracy, with enormous inroads of private property, and the liquidation of almost all the proletarian state forms, Soviets, Workers' Militias, etc.

"The Stalinist bureaucracy is not a separate class. Stalinism today is a social reformist force resting on the material base of the October Revolution and its property relations, objectively aiding the restoration of the capitalist rule in the Soviet Union and counter-revolution on a world scale. The theoretical base of Stalinism is the nationalist conception of Socialism in one country. Marxists will support the Soviet Union no matter in what kind of a war it is involved. But such support and defense can be accomplished only on the revolutionary line of the extension of the October Revolution and the re-establishment within the Soviet Union of full worker's democracy and soviets, a political revolution again Stalinism."

3—The Character of the State:

"The state is the product of irreconcilable class antagonisms. It is the instrument by which the ruling class suppresses other classes. Under Capitalism it is the instrument of the capitalists for the exploitation and subjection of the proletariat and the oppressed. This is true of the colonial and semi-colonial countries as well. There can be no 'anti-imperialist,' 'non-capitalist,' 'workers and peasants,' state other than the Dictatorship of the Proletariat. There is no state between the Dictatorship of the Bourgeoisie and the Dictatorship of the Proletariat."

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*This point treated of "revolutionary defeatism." Because of war conditions, it is deemed necessary to eliminate this reference.—*Editor*

"The basic question in any revolution is that of state power."

4—The Road to Power:**

Without a party, a vanguard on a Marxian program, a successful revolution is impossible. Every proletarian revolution has a certain period where side by side with the government of the bourgeoisie there develops the Dual Power of the workers. The backbone of dual power and later the Worker's State are the Soviets of democratically elected delegates from the factories, mines, mills, battalions, farms, etc., and the Workers' Militias."

5—The Revolutionary Marxian Organization:

"Just like the labor theory of value is the key to the understanding of the economic structure of Capitalism, so too, the political and organizational independence of the revolutionary Marxian organization is the key to scientific action against Capitalism. Only on this basis is it possible to carry on independent working class action against Capitalism and its agents in the workers' ranks. The organization must be based on the principled Marxian positions and must be international in program and organization, based on democratic centralism. The party fights for the day to day demands of the working class, but at no time separates them from the object and aim of the ultimate demand for the overthrow of capitalism."

6—The Capitalist Mode of Production:

Without a clear understanding and application of the principled economic theories of Marxism no proper revolutionary action can be had. The contradiction between socialized production and capitalist individual appropriation is revealed in the antagonisms through the laws of accumulation of capital and surplus value, through crisis, overproduction and imperialist wars. The labor theory of value and its unfolding reveals the basic features of the capitalist mode of production.

7—Dialectical Materialism:

"Dialectics is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought." For the Marxists, "Things exist independently of our consciousness, independently of our sensations. Our sensations, our consciousness is only a representation of the outer world." (Lenin.)

Dialectics is first and primary the process of nature and second, as a reflection of this process, the theory of knowledge—Dialectical Materialism, as the highest developed method of scientific investigation.

Historical Materialism (and an understanding of the class struggle) is the application of Dialectical Materialism to the sphere of social development.

From the above principled positions our strategy and tactics flow. Our strategy and tactics for any given situation must be based upon the whole principle position.

**The author's reference to "revolutionary force," in this connection, is likewise eliminated.—*Editor*

Yes, we are proud to say that we stand on the principles of Marxism. With this scientific weapon of the class struggle man will reshape the world. Socialism is *inevitable.* The breakdown of capitalism and the inevitable social revolutions, a whole series of proletarian and colonial revolutions will push the masses in action, revolutionary action to solve their problems. This objective factor together with the *will to power* by the vanguard organization, by the revolutionary Marxists will bring about Socialism. We are not fatalists, we are not blind mechanical automatons. Man, thinking man is a *material* part of society that will remake society.

Correspondence

Dear Mr. Ziegler:

I have looked through the copy of *Modern Socialism* which you sent me and welcome your effort at Socialist re-education, though I probably do not share all your ideas on this subject.

I do not think it is enough to abandon a sterile Marxist orthodoxy which no longer fits the facts of life. It is also necessary to abandon the intensely sectarian *approach* which has been the psychological fruit of that orthodoxy. Even a revised Marxism can be thoroughly sectarian.

Also, we must begin to think, in far more concrete terms than in the past, about the structure of the new society as well as the road to power, and of how this society can be organized to avoid the pitfalls of authoritarianism. We can no longer brush this matter aside with a few vague phrases about "blue-prints." After Russia, the workers are going to demand some kind of blueprint instead of taking us on faith.

Sincerely yours,

LILLIAN SYMES

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One Author's Views

Dear Mr. Ziegler:

My publishers forwarded only your letter, so I have not seen your periodical yet.

There never was a moment in my life when I visioned the ruling class as relinquishing its power voluntarily. If it is ever to be overthrown, force of one kind or another will have to be used, but it has been sufficiently proven that one cannot look to Marx for the answer to how and when.

I do not think, as you suggest, that what you call "the principles of scientific Marxism" and the prophecies and tactics of Marx and Engels are "two entirely different propositions," inasmuch as the latter purport to be based upon the former and are to a great extent.

In your letter you indicate that you have already rejected some of the more important ingredients of the "science" of Marx. Why, then, go on calling it a science? Why go on trying to defend the authority and standing of Marx? People who are determined to worship Marx can hardly fail to depend to some extent upon his prophecies and attempt to take his advice on tactics.

This of course does not mean that I think Marx never gave expression to a sensible idea, but only that his ideas should be taken for what they are worth and no more. In the main, his "science" is worse than worthless.

I did not find it possible to say everything that I wanted to say in CHALLENGE TO KARL MARX. Maybe you'll understand me better after my next book.

Very truly yours,

JOHN KENNETH TURNER

(*Continued from Page* 20)

experience of the class struggle will supply the proletariat with what "little philosophy, sociology, economics and political science" they lack.

Maitland and Mattick constitute the obverse and converse of the same medal. The former stresses the "ideological" character of the party, obscuring the real dictatorial nature of his Leninist ideal in a cloud of democratic phrascology. Mattick, on the other hand, pictures the party as exclusively an anti-working class, power instrumentality. He, for his part, obscures and ignores the role of the party as an ideological grouping.

In contrast to the Pannekoek-Mattick concept of "automatic" Socialist consciousness, and Maitland's power-vanguard party, we submit the DeLeonist concept of the role of the party.

DeLeon conceived the party as a teacher, not as a leader over the working class. Long before the bankruptcy of the traditonal party, at a time when it was in the heyday of its popularity, DeLeon as a Socialist pathfinder discarded the power-vanguard concept. To DeLeon the party was an educational-propaganda organization for the distilling of Socialist ideology. He violently disputed the Maitland-Leninist concept that the working class was incapable of carrying out its own revolution, and its corollary, that the workers were in need of a power party to "guide" and "protect" them. DeLeon never tired of pointing out that the revolution must be the conscious act of the workers themselves, functioning through their own economic organs. "No bunch of office-holders can emancipate the workers," was one of his favorite texts. To DeLeon, the party was transitory in nature, its role limited to the period prior to the revolution. After the revolution it was the Industrial Union, composed of the entire working class, which was to function as the government. He never tired of repeating that any attempt upon the part of the party to perpetuate itself after the revolution would constitute a usurpation.

Mattick states an inescapable truth when he points out that the proletariat's organizational opportunities are rapidly contracting. The party-intoxicated Maitland speaks of the party of the future being the product of decades of struggle. This is sheerest nonsense; the working class hasn't got decades at its disposal to perfect its organization. Mattick scores a telling point against Maitland in pointing this out, but the shortness of time available does not defeat our contention that the class struggle of itself does not create Socialist consciousness. If anything, the small time remaining in which the working class may act decisively, is only added reason for Mattick, Pannekoek, et al., to abandon the traditional Marxist inevitability complex—the basic premise for all the bankrupt tactics which have led the working class from one defeat to another, until today we face the absolute victory of Fascism and the burial of the proletarian revolution for this historical period.

Acknowledgment

In our last issue, in quoting from George Orwell's informative "London Letter" which appeared in the *Partisan Review*, July-August, 1941, we inadvertently neglected to credit the *Partisan Review* as the original source.

A Bastian of Marxist Enlightenment

Our second number appears with the country actually at war. Now, as never before, is there a need for a journal such as MODERN SOCIALISM, an independent theoretical organ of Scientific Socialism.

There are those who sincerely believe that all thoughts and activities should be concentrated on the war effort against Nazism. MODERN SOCIALISM has taken its stand for full and unequivocal support of the military struggle against Nazism and its allies. Nothwithstanding this necessity, this is not the time to permit the vital work of Marxist enlightenment to go by the board or be "temporarily suspendend." Socialism still continues to be the only hope of humanity with Marxism the beacon light guiding proletarian emancipation.

As an independent, critical organ of Marxism devoted to the specific task of revolutionary re-education, MODERN SOCIALISM performs an indispensable function in these critical days. It is a bastian of Marxist enlightenment. The common enemy of the Socialist press—financial embarrassment—has invested this bastian. Do not permit it to fall! If you have not already done so, rush in your subscription and get your Socialist friends to do likewise.

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